

Message Text

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50

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 IO-13 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-12 SCS-03 SCA-01 RSR-01 /127 W

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P R 131234Z JUL 73

FM AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2037

INFO AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 LOURENCO MARQUES 466

DEPT PASS TO OTHER POSTS AS DESIRED

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, PINS, MZ

SUBJ: ALLEGED MOZAMBIQUE MASSACRES

REF: A) STATE 134671; B) LONDON 7924; C) LONDON 7969; D)

LOURENCO MARQUES 350; E) OTHERS AS LISTED IN BODY OF
TELEGRAM.

SUMMARY: DESPITE SPARSITY OF EVIDENCE, THERE IS REASON TO
BELIEVE THAT SOME INCIDENT INVOLVING DEATH OF CIVILIANS
SOUTH OF TETE LAST DECEMBER DID OCCUR, AND THAT THERE WERE
OTHER INCIDENTS AROUND MUCUMBURA IN 1971. HOWEVER, THERE IS
NOTHING TO SUGGEST THAT ATROCITIES OR TERROR ARE DELIBERATE
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FEATURES OF PORTUGUESE POLICY. END SUMMARY.

1. WE HAVE LITTLE TO CONFIRM ALLEGED MASSACRE REPORTED BY FATHER HASTINGS. WHILE WE DO OCCASIONALLY HEAR UNCONFIRMED RUMORS OF ISOLATED ATROCITIES, AND OF COURSE READ ABOUT THEM IN PUBLICATIONS BY FRELIMO AND OTHER ANTI-PORTUGUESE SOURCES, WE HAVE NOT IN OUR OWN TRAVELS THROUGHOUT NORTH SEEN EVIDENCE OF ATROCITIES, WAR CRIMES OR OTHER UNTOWARD ACTIONS, ALTHOUGH WE HAVE INDICATIONS FROM STRAY CONVERSATIONS AND SCATTERED REFERENCES OF UNDETERMINED VALIDITY THAT, AS IN ALL WARS, SOME UNACCEPTABLE INCIDENTS DO OCCUR, ESPECIALLY IN THE HEAT OF BATTLE. IT IS NOT OUR IMPRESSION THAT PORTUGUESE SOLDIERS ARE ESSENTIALLY DIFFERENT FROM, OR MORE CRUEL THAN, ANY OTHERS FIGHTING UNDER SIMILAR CIRCUMSTANCES.

2. ATTORNEY FOR SPANISH PRIESTS (BURGOS FATHERS) PRESENTLY IN PRISON AWAITING TRIAL IN LOURENCO MARQUES (REF D) TELLS US CHURCH DOES HAVE EVIDENCE OF "MASSACRE" WHICH ALLEGEDLY TOOK PLACE NEAR TETE LAST DECEMBER. (ANOTHER CATHOLIC PRIEST DESCRIBED THE LOCATION TO US AS BEING IN THE AREA SERVED BY THE SAO PEDRO BURGOS FATHERS MISSION, WHICH COULD WELL PUT IT NEAR CAROEIRA AS CLAIMED IN FRENCH NEWS REPORT CARRIED IN LOCAL PRESS) ATTORNEY SAID BISHOP OF TETE OVERFLEW ALLEGED SITE AND SAW "MANY" UNBURIED BODIES LYING AROUND; PRIESTS WERE SUBSEQUENTLY ALLOWED INTO THE AREA TO BURY BODIES AFTER BISHOP HAD THREATENED HE WOULD OTHERWISE BURY THEM PERSONALLY. SURVIVORS REPORTEDLY TOLD MISSIONARIES THAT VILLAGE FIRST BOMBED BY AIR FORCE AND SUBSEQUENTLY ENTERED BY GEPS (ALL-AFRICAN VOLUNTEER PARATROOPER UNIT) WHO REPORTEDLY LINED UP VILLAGERS AND SHOT THEM. ATTORNEY DID NOT KNOW SPECIFIC IDENTITY OF PRIESTS WHO REPORTED THE AFFAIR, PRESUMABLY TO BISHOP OF TETE. HE HAD NOT HEARD, AND WAS INCLINED TO DOUBT THE MORE LURID DETAILS OF FATHER HASTINGS' ACCOUNT, AND DID NOT BELIEVE KILLINGS WERE IN ANY SENSE REFLECTION OF GOVERNMENT POLICY, OR NORMAL OCCURRENCE.

3. DURING DECEMBER, 1972, PORTUGUESE ARMED FORCES CARRIED OUT MAJOR MILITARY OPERATIONS SOUTH OF TETE CITY, DURING WHICH IT CLAIMED TO HAVE KILLED 98 FRELIMO GUERRILLAS (COMMUNIQUE REPORTED LOURENCO MARQUES A-4, JAN 5). IN CONFIDENTIAL BRIEFING TO CONSULAR CORPS COVERING THIS PERIOD (LOURENCO MARQUES CONFIDENTIAL

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A-18, FEB 2) HIGH COMMAND SPOKESMAN DESCRIBED SERIES OF ACTIONS CODE-NAMED "MEDIDA" IN THIS AREA WHICH HAD BEEN UNDERTAKEN AFTER DISCOVERY OF MAJOR THREAT TO ATTACK TETE CITY ITSELF (INCLUDING FRELIMO THREAT TO ASSASSINATE DISTRICT GOVERNOR). OPERATION CAUSED MANY FRELIMO CASUALTIES, AND WHILE WE CANNOT IDENTIFY ANY OF THIS SPECIFICALLY WITH ALLEGED MASSACRE, DECEMBER WAS A PERIOD OF MORE THAN USUAL MILITARY ACTIVITY NEAR TETE ON BOTH SIDES.

4. ONLY OTHER "MASSACRE" OF WHICH WE HAVE HEARD IS SO-CALLED "MUCUMBURA MASSACRE" IN 1971 DENOUNCED BY IMPRISONED SPANISH PRIESTS DURING MACUTI PRIEST TRIAL LAST JANUARY (LOURENCO MARQUES A-21 OF FEB 23), WHICH HAVE ALSO BEEN SUBJECT OF CONSIDERABLE FRELIMO LITERATURE AS WELL AS REPORTS FROM CHURCH SOURCES (LOURENCO MARQUES A-133 OF AUG 22, 72). THIS REFERRED TO SERIES OF INCIDENTS NEAR MUCUMBURA FROM MAY TO NOVEMBER 1971, IN WHICH REPORTEDLY CIVILIANS WERE KILLED BOTH BY PORTUGUESE AND RHODESIAN (OPERATING SEPARATELY) TROOPS.
VAN OSS

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 IO-13 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

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USIA-12 SCS-03 SCA-01 RSR-01 /127 W
----- 080435

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5. WE HAVE BEEN UNABLE LOCATE PLACE NAMED "WIRIYAMU", "WIRIYAMURU" OR ANY SIMILAR NAME, AND MOZAMBIQUE AUTHORITIES DENY SUCH PLACE EXISTS. ANY VILLAGE OF OVER 400 IN SPARSELY POPULATED TETE WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY HAVE AN

OFFICIAL NAME OF SOME SORT.

6. TO BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE, TERROR AGAINST CIVILIAN POPULATION IS NOT REPEAT NOT DELIBERATE POLICY OF EITHER MOZAMBIQUE GOVERNMENT OR ARMED FORCES. LATTER DO BURN ABANDONED VILLAGES AFTER INHABITANTS HAVE BEEN MOVED TO ALDEAMENTOS (NEW VILLAGES) TO DISCOURAGE THEIR RETURN TO OLD HUTS. ALSO, IN SOME OPERATIONS, PORTUGUESE ARMED FORCES GIVE ADVANCE WARNING TO INHABITANTS TO CLEAR OUT OF AREA BY CERTAIN DATE. AFTER THAT DATE, ANYONE FOUND IN AREA IS ASSUMED TO BE HOSTILE AND DEALT WITH ACCORDINGLY. HOWEVER, MOZAMBIQUE
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AUTHORITIES SEEM TO US SINCERE IN BELIEVING THAT ENLISTING SUPPORT OF AFRICANS THROUGH GOOD TREATMENT AND SOCIAL BENEFITS IS ESSENTIAL TO SUCCESS OF PORTUGUESE POLICIES IN AFRICA. THEY FREQUENTLY CRITICIZE ALLEGEDLY OVER-HARSH TACTICS REPORTEDLY BEING FOLLOWED IN NEIGHBORING RHODESIA, WHICH EXPLAINS THEIR RELUCTANCE TO ALLOW RHODESIAN TROOPS INTO MOZAMBIQUE EXCEPT UNDER CONDITIONS INVOLVING HOT PURSUIT. ALTHOUGH SOME CIVILIANS (MAINLY OPPOSITIONISTS) IN LOURENCO MARQUES CYNICALLY WILLING TO BELIEVE ANYTHING TO DISADVANTAGE OF GOVERNMENT, WE HAVE HEARD NOTHING RELIABLE TO SUGGEST THAT ATROCITIES OR MASSACRES ARE WIDESPREAD OR OFFICIALLY TOLERATED. GIVEN WELL-OILED LOCAL GRAPE-VINE, WE WOULD EXPECT STORIES OF SUCH INCIDENTS, WHETHER TRUE OR FALSE, TO SPREAD RAPIDLY.

7. NEVERTHELESS, SOME ATROCITIES AND OUTRAGEOUS INCIDENTS SEEM TO BE THE INEVITABLE CONCOMITANTS OF ALL WARS AND INSURGENCIES REGARDLESS OF EFFORTS TO PREVENT THEM. IN COMMUNIQUE RELEASED JANUARY 27 (REPORTED LOURENCO MARQUES A-19, FEB 9) HIGH COMMAND "ADMITTED" TEN ALLEGATIONS OF "BAD BEHAVIOR BY TROOPS AGAINST POPULATION" IN 1971 AND FIVE IN 1972, OF WHICH ONE WAS PUNISHED BY CRIMINAL AND FOUR BY DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS, AND ONE STILL UNDER INVESTIGATION.

8. IN SUM, ON BASIS OF VERY LIMITED EVIDENCE AVAILABLE TO US AT THIS TIME, WE INCLINED TO BELIEVE THAT AN INCIDENT OR INCIDENTS PROBABLY DID TAKE PLACE SOUTH OF TETE CITY LAST DECEMBER IN WHICH CIVILIANS WERE KILLED BY TROOPS. HOWEVER, THE SPECIFIC DETAILS IN FATHER HASTINGS STORY INCLUDING ACTUAL QUOTES, SEEM IMPROBABLE TO US, COMING AS THEY DO FROM THIRD HAND ACCOUNTS OF REPORTS BY FRIGHTENED SURVIVORS, AND SOUND VERY MUCH LIKE PROPAGANDA. NEVERTHELESS, EVEN IF IT IS EVENTUALLY ESTABLISHED THAT SOME KIND OF "MASSACRE" DID TAKE PLACE NEAR TETE, AND/OR NEAR MUCUMBURA A YEAR EARLIER, OR IF, AS SEEMS NOT IMPROBAL, OTHER SIMILAR INCIDENTS COME TO LIGHT FROM TIME TO TIME, WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT IT CAN BE INFERRED THAT SUCH ATROCITIES REPRESENT PORTUGUESE POLICY

OR THAT THEY ARE WIDESPREAD OR GENERAL. EVERYTHING WE HAVE
SEEN AND HEARD SUGGESTS THAT PORTUGUESE AUTHORITIES SINCERELY
BELIEVE THAT ENLISTING THE ALLEGIENCE AND SUPPORT OF THE
AFRICAN POPULATION IS CRUCIAL TO THEIR CAUSE, AND THAT THEY
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ARE MAKING VERY GREAT EFFORTS TO DO SO, EVEN IF IT MEANS
TAKING SECURITY RISKS. THE PORTUGUESE ARE TOUGH, AND ARE
FIGHTING A MOST DIFFICULT KIND OF WAR WITH TROOPS OF WIDELY
VARYING BACKGROUND AND EDUCATION. BUT WE THINK IT MOST UN-
LIKELY THAT THEY ARE SECRETLY IMPLEMENTING A POLICY OF TERROR
DIAMETRICALLY OPPOSED TO THEIR PROCLAIMED BASIC STRATEGY AND
ONE THAT WOULD BE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE IN THE HIGHEST DEGREE.
VAN OSS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 JUL 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973LOUREN00466
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS VAN OSS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: LOURENCO MARQUES
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730735/aaaaazuh.tel
Line Count: 241
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 73 A) STATE 134671; B) LONDON 7924; C) LONDON 7969; D)
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 SEP 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20-Sep-2001 by freemaal>; APPROVED <05-Nov-2001 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ALLEGED MOZAMBIQUE MASSACRES
TAGS: MOPS, PINS, MZ
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005